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Open Systems upgrades OSAS with new windowing features. (accounting  
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ABSTRACT: Open Systems rolls out the \$795 Open Systems Accounting Software (OSAS) 4.0, which features an upgrade of the software's windowing and menu system. The upgrade was made possible by graphics features of Basis International's BBx Progression 3 computer programming language. One user says OSAS 4.0 has a simpler and cleaner interface than earlier versions. OSAS 4.0 also includes a feature for choosing menu items with the cursor instead of typing in the name or number of the desired menu item. OSAS base modules are available for Unix, Xenix, Ctix (Convergent Technologies' Unix derivative), DOS and DOS network.

TEXT:

By Marc Ferranti

Open Systems has given its accounting software a new look by upgrading the package's windowing and menu system to make it easier to navigate through the program and enter data, company officials and early users said.

The accounting software's enhanced windowing features were made possible by the advanced graphics capabilities of the new version of Basis International's BBx Progression 3 programming language, in which the Open Systems software is written, said officials at Open Systems in Eden Prairie, Minn.

Open Systems Accounting Software (OSAS) version 4.0, released earlier this month, also reduces the time it takes to retrieve files for reports by taking advantage of BBx/ 3's multikeying process, which adds multiple labels to files, cutting down or effectively eliminating the time it takes to sort them.

"The program has a much more modern look, with a simpler and cleaner interface," said John Hendrickson, president of Business Microware Inc., a computer-accounting consulting firm in New Brighton, Minn., that resells a variety of accounting programs, including OSAS, and uses OSAS for its own accounting.

As users made menu selections in earlier versions of the program, the main menu disappeared, said Hendrickson, a beta tester of OSAS 4.0. The program now features tiled, overlapping windows that help users keep their place in the system, he said.

The software also includes a new "look and select" feature for choosing menu items with the cursor, instead of having to type in the number or name of each menu item desired, Hendrickson added. "This is a much more standard way of doing things and makes a difference to users who work with other applications."

The enhanced windowing system helps cut down on data-entry time by allowing users to add records "on the fly," said Ben Orth, president of Kansas City Computer Services in Prairie Village, Kan., an accounting and database consulting firm and reseller.

"If you're doing invoices in accounts payable and have to add an invoice from a new vendor, you don't have to close the screen and go to vendor maintenance to update your list of vendors," explained Orth. "You can press a function key that calls up a window of your vendor list

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Features that were **added** to individual modules include 1099 reporting to magnetic media in Accounts Payable, recurring billings to automatically bill repetitive orders in Accounts Receivable, and a trial balance worksheet in General Ledger.

OSAS 4.0 base modules are available now for \$795 in DOS, DOS network, Unix, Xenix and Ctix (Convergent Technologies' Unix derivative) versions. A Fixed Assets module and vertical-market modules for manufacturing firms will be released in the fourth quarter. Open Systems can be reached at (612) 829-0011.

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